AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

In the specification:

Please replace the first paragraph on page 21 with the following rewritten paragraph:

For the assessment of the transcriptional activity a dimer of the double-stranded oligonucleotide of the *Brachyury* binding element (BBE) AATTTCACACCTAGGTGTGAAATT (SEQ ID No: 17) (Kispert et al., 1995) was incorporated in the *Bam*HI site before the HSV thymidine kinase minimal promoter fused to the cloramphenicol acetyltransferase (CAT)-reporter of pBLCAT5 (Boshart et al., 1992) to give reporter plasmid pBBE-CAT5. 20 h before transfection, human embryonic kidney HEK293T cells were plated at a density of 1 x 10^4 /cm^2 in 6-well plates and allowed to grow under normal culture conditions. For co-transfection experiments, 250 ng per well of Brachyury expression vector and 250, 500 or 750 ng of the expression vector encoding dn*Brachyury*. Empty vector was added to adjust the amount of expression plasmids at 1ug/ml. 260 ng of BBE-CAT reporter (pBBE-CAT5) was added in the presence of 140 ng of RSV-lacZ vector using the DOSPER procedure (see below). Cells were allowed to incubate for 48 h. Then, cells were collected and b-galactosidase assays were performed with the chemiluminescent b-gal reporter gene assay (Roche Diagnostics, Mannheim, Germany) and CAT-assays were carried out with the CAT ELISA kit (Roche Diagnostics, Mannheim, Germany). b-gal assay results were used to normalize the CAT assay results for transfection efficiency. All DNA transfection experiments were repeated at least three times in triplicate.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 22 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Total cellular RNAs were prepared by TriReagent^{LS} according to the manufacturer's protocol (Molecular Research Center Inc.). Five ug of total RNA was reverse transcribed and cDNA aliquots were subjected to PCR. RT-PCR was normalized by the transcriptional levels of HPRT. The HPRT-specific 5' and 3' primers were GCTGGTGAAAAGGACCTCT (SEQ ID No: 1) and AAGTAGATGGCCACAGGACT (SEQ ID No: 2), respectively. The

following 5' and 3' primers were used to evaluate osteo/chondrogenic differentiation: collagen 1a1: GCCCTGCCTGCTTCGTG (SEQ ID No: 3), CGTAAGTTGGAATGGTTTTT (SEQ ID No: 4); collagen 2a1: CCTGTCTGCTTCTTGTAAAAC (SEQ ID No: 5), AGCATCTGTAGGGGTCTTCT (SEQ ID No: 6); osteocalcin: GCAGACCTAGCAGACACCAT (SEQ ID No: 7), GAGCTGCTGTGACATCCATAC (SEQ ID No: 8); PTH/PTHrP-receptor: GTTGCCATCATATACTGTTTCTGC (SEQ ID No: 9), GGCTTCTTGGTCCATCTGTCC (SEQ ID No: 10); FGFR3: CCTGCGCAGTCCCCCAAAGAAG (SEQ ID No: 11); CTGCAGGCATCAAAGGAGTAGT (SEQ ID No: 12); FGFR2: TTGGAGGATGGGCCGGTGTGGTG (SEQ ID No: 13), GCGCTTCATCTGCCTGGTCTTG (SEQ ID No: 14). The primer pairs for *Brachyury* and *Sox9* have been described in (Johansson and Wiles, 1995) and (Zehentner et al., 1999), respectively. Vector-borne transcripts for *Brachyury* were evaluated with nested primers sets with either vector specific 5'- or 3'-primers: TTAGTCTTTTTGTCTTTTATTTCA (SEQ ID No: 15); GATCGAAGCTCAATTAACCCTCAC (SEQ ID No: 16).

SEQUENCE LISTING

After the end of the application, please insert the Sequence Listing attached hereto.